

IOWA OUTDOORS

Iowa Department of Natural Resources
www.iowadnr.gov

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MAQUOKETA MAN RECEIVES 43 CHARGES FOR WILDLIFE VIOLATIONS

MAQUOKETA – The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) filed 43 charges Monday against Lorin W. Felderman, 36, of Maquoketa, for allegedly running an unlicensed taxidermy business, unlawful possession and storage of game, and other violations. Felderman is scheduled for an Aug. 30 court date.

Conservation officers with the DNR executed a search warrant on May 7, after learning from a confidential informant that Felderman was allegedly practicing taxidermy without a license. Officers seized 26 deer heads, red fox, coyotes, different parts from a barred owl, and other wildlife. The evidence was found throughout the house.

Among the evidence was a landowner tenant tag issued in Felderman's name attached to a deer with an antler spread that scored 150 points. Felderman allegedly does not own any land.

Felderman was charged with 20 counts of unlawful possession and storage, 20 counts of taxidermy violation, one count of possession of a protected species for the barred owl, one count of illegal possession of a deer and one count of practicing taxidermy without a license.

If convicted, Felderman could face fines and damages totaling nearly \$18,000 and suspension of his hunting, furharvester and taxidermy privileges for up to three years. Felderman's name would then be entered in to the Wildlife Violators Compact meaning the states that are members of the compact would deny Felderman similar privileges in their state.

For more information, contact Mick Klemesrud at 515-281-8653.

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CAMPGROUNDS AT NEAR CAPACITY FOR LABOR DAY WEEKEND

DES MOINES – The Labor Day Weekend is shaping up to be a busy one in Iowa State Parks. Campers have reserved nearly every campsite with electricity available using the reservation system. That means campers will need to arrive early in the week to claim a first come, first serve site.

“Camping is a great way to spend quality time with friends and family and with the Labor Day Holiday, we know the campgrounds are going to be busy. We will be encouraging campers to be courteous to each other and be good neighbors,” said Kevin Szcodronski, chief of the Iowa State Parks bureau. “It would be wise for campers who do not have a reservation to call the park ahead of time to see what is available for first come, first serve campsites and adjust their arrival plans accordingly.”

Some of the more heavily used parks will be filled by mid-week heading in to the holiday weekend so campers who cannot get out to claim a spot until later in the week may need to have a back-up plan.

“Campers may have to drive further or select a different park depending on campsite availability and their arrival time. My advice is for campers to be flexible on campground choice. Maybe try a park that you have not been to before,” Szcodronski said.

State park campgrounds that may have electrical sites available include AA Call and Pilot Knob in north central Iowa, Waubonsie in southwest Iowa, Red Haw and Nine Eagles in south central Iowa, Union Grove, near Marshalltown, and Dolliver near Fort Dodge.

Black Hawk State Park and Prairie Rose State Park, both in western Iowa, recently completed campground improvement projects and are open for camping, but are not part of the reservation system. Both park campgrounds will be available for reservation in 2008.

The DNR is currently working to upgrade the facilities at Stone and the modern campground at Lake Macbride State Park and the campgrounds are closed until the work is finished. The primitive campground at Lake Macbride remains open.

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Winner Chosen from Thousands of Triple-A Fans All Across U.S.

IOWA CUBS FAN WINS NATIONAL 'TAKE ME FISHING' SWEEPSTAKES & HEADS HOME WITH TRITON BASS BOAT

DES MOINES - The winner of the national Take Me Fishing™ baseball sweepstakes is George Hans, of Ankeny, who beat out all of the other Triple-A Baseball fans from 27 teams to take home the grand prize. Hans, 74, was presented with a fully equipped, 17-foot Triton bass boat and trailer when he took to the field with his wife, "Bel," during Saturday's game at Principal Park.

"I was completely in shock when they told me," said Hans, a Des Moines-area resident for the past three decades and a professional truck driver for more than 40 years. "Although I'm not a big angler, it looks like I'll be doing a lot more fishing."

A season ticket-holder and regular fixture in Section H at Iowa Cubs games, Hans claims to attend "maybe 90 percent" of all home games. It was at one of those games earlier this season that he entered the Take Me Fishing Sweepstakes to get a shot at the bass boat. Hans wanted to win the boat for his seven grandchildren, many of whom enjoy playing ball and going fishing.

Sponsored by the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation (RBFF) in collaboration with Triple-A Baseball, the contest generated nearly 20,000 entries from the 27 participating Triple-A teams. "Baseball and fishing are two of America's favorite pastimes and they have many of the same family values," said RBFF President and CEO Frank Peterson. "We heartily congratulate George on his big win and know that he and his wife will enjoy sharing time on the water with their grandkids."

The new, 17-foot Triton VT 17 sports an 85-inch beam for tremendous interior room and exceptional stability while fishing or running. With its extra-wide 60-inch bottom, the boat draws little water, allowing anglers to access shallow backwaters where lunker bass lurk. It incorporates the same high level of materials and construction found in the company's premium tournament models. The total package also features a Mercury-powered outboard and trailer, and carries a retail value of \$13,000.

Cubs fans hoping to congratulate Hans might be lucky enough to spot him headed to the ballpark or just driving around town in his Model A Ford. He loves to tinker with old cars, and the one he drives was built around the time he was born. But don't ask him who's older.

"I've got an old car and a new boat," said Hans. "That should keep me young at heart."

Asked if the Model A can tow a boat, Hans laughed and said he planned to get a hitch for his other car. Where will he go on his first fishing and boating outing? "Maybe a day on Saylorville Reservoir in Polk City," he added. "It's nice up there."

For more information, contact Heather Sieber at 703-778-5160 or hsieber@rbff.org

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ALGAE DIE-OFF CAUSES LAKE PANORAMA FISH KILL

PANORA – The Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has determined that low oxygen caused by an algae die-off is responsible for a fish kill involving hundreds of 4 to 6-inch crappies in Burchfield Cove, an arm on the north side of Lake Panorama.

"We investigated the fish kill and found nothing to indicate any potential source of pollution or any other possible cause," said Chris Larson, fisheries supervisor for the DNR in southwest Iowa. "The fish kill was limited to one fish species and one location on the lake."

The water in some parts of Lake Panorama has a green coloration to it from a large algae bloom. During the hot weather last week, there was likely a significant algae die-off in the cove. When algae dies, it uses oxygen in the water to break down. A combination of hot weather and low oxygen can cause fish kills.

"We have seen a lot of these natural fish kills in the area recently. Warm water holds less oxygen, and decaying vegetation uses oxygen in the water and the combination of the two can cause fish kills," Larson said.

The fish kill is not anticipated to impact the fish population in Lake Panorama.

For more information, contact Mick Klemesrud at 515-281-8653.

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HOT SUMMER WEATHER TAKING A TOLL ON FISH IN SOME FARM PONDS

Calls from farm pond owners to the Iowa Department of Natural Resources about fish kills has been on the increase with the recent hot weather.

“These reports of summer fish kills is not surprising. The hot summer weather has created high water temperatures which is stressful to aquatic plants and algae which can lead to summer fish kills,” said Chris Larson, fisheries supervisor for the DNR in southwest Iowa.

“When vegetation dies, the bacteria feeding on the decaying plants use oxygen to the point where low oxygen areas of the pond are not suitable for fish and some die. Usually larger fish are more susceptible to dying from low oxygen; however some smaller fish can be affected as well,” Larson said. “The important thing to remember is that these partial summer kills rarely kill all the fish in the pond and in a couple of years the pond will be back in balance.”

It is not uncommon to see hundreds of dead fish from a large summer kill, but there are still many more live fish still in the pond. An Iowa farm pond can support 500 to 600 pounds of fish per acre of water and most of fish in a pond weigh less than a few ounces. If a pond owner has a fish kill of less than a couple of hundred fish and there appears to be no apparent reason, for example nearby aerial spraying or recent heavy rainfall causing runoff, it is more than likely from a natural phenomenon such as summer kill.

Some measures that can help reduce the chances of summer kills include; pond deepening, watershed protection measures such as buffer strips and sediment basins, and livestock exclusion.

For additional information on farm pond management visit with your local Iowa DNR fisheries biologist.

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[Electronic photo available]

RIVER OTTER’S RETURN BRINGS SUCCESS AND CONTROVERSY

By Lowell Washburn

Iowa Department of Natural Resources

Twenty years ago, wild river otters were listed as “occasional visitors” to a handful of tributary streams along northeast Iowa’s Mississippi River. Today, these curious and energetic predators can be found in virtually every watershed, large or small, from border to border.

There can be no question that the otter’s return stands as one of Iowa’s most successful chapters in wildlife restoration. But with success comes controversy. As otters continue to increase and expand their range, some anglers are concerned that the popular furbearers will have a negative impact on local fisheries.

“It’s definitely a topic where passions run high,” says DNR Furbearer Specialist, Ron Andrews. “We’d love to be able to give fishermen a definite yes or no answer, but the fact of the matter is that we just can’t say with certainty what impact -- if any -- otters really have on specific fisheries.”

What researchers know most about are the interactions between otters and fish within small [farm] pond settings. Small ponds are the biological equivalent of ‘aquatic cereal bowls’ and present foraging otters with the potential to virtually eliminate desirable fish populations, says Andrews.

“But when it comes to a stream setting, the jury is still out,” Andrews added. “Otters are opportunistic and will take whatever fish species are most readily available. In many cases they end up foraging on less desirable species such as chubs, suckers, or carp.”

Although trout fishing enthusiasts have voiced concerns over seeing an increased number of otters along northeastern Iowa streams, there is currently no evidence to support claims that the furbearers are having a negative impact on cold water fisheries.

“We often find river otters and trout living in the same streams,” says Andrews. “The numbers of catchable trout and the natural reproduction of [brown] trout remains very good in some of the same streams where we also have some the best otter populations found anywhere in the state.”

During the fall of 2006, river otters became legal game for Iowa trappers. The season was limited to a statewide take of 400 animals [which trappers met in just 10 days] and was the first legal harvest of otters in more than a century. A similar season is scheduled for this November.

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EIGHT OPERATION RELEAF EVENTS PLANNED IN IOWA FOR FALL 2007

CEDAR RAPIDS –Iowans looking for a cost-effective, yet eye-pleasing way to reduce home cooling and heating costs are encouraged to participate in Operation ReLeaf and plant a tree.

Interstate Power and Light Company, an Alliant Energy Company, will sponsor eight Operation ReLeaf events throughout the state of Iowa this fall. Operation ReLeaf is a residential tree-planting program that promotes long-term energy and natural resource conservation.

Through the program, more than 3,000 high quality, three- to eight-foot landscaping trees will be offered for just \$25 each. The trees typically retail for \$65 or more and will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis.

“Encouraging residents to plant trees in their yard is an effective way to reduce energy costs and promote a healthy and aesthetically pleasing environment,” says Tom Aller, President, Alliant Energy – IP&L. “We’re pleased to offer this opportunity to our customers and hope many will participate.”

Fall 2007 Operation ReLeaf events will be held in the following communities: Dyersville on Sept. 8; Chariton on Sept. 8; Marshalltown on Sept. 15; Marion on Sept. 22; Jefferson on Sept. 29; Thompson on Oct. 6; Jewell on Oct. 6 and Washington on Oct. 13. Tree species offered will vary at each event and include both shade trees and evergreens.

Operation ReLeaf is a partnership initiative funded by Alliant Energy and administered by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources (DNR) with assistance from several host county conservation boards and select Resource Conservation & Development areas.

“All trees are purchased through a bidding process from local nurseries,” says Paul Tauke, Iowa DNR’s Forestry Bureau Chief. “This is a great way for homeowners to get a quality tree at an affordable price.”

Operation ReLeaf participants must be Alliant Energy customers. Advance order is required and purchase is limited to two trees per household. In the event there are additional trees available on distribution day, those trees will be released for purchase at that time. Order forms are available online at www.alliantenergy.com/releaf, or by calling the Iowa DNR at 515-281-6749.

For more information, contact Amber Mulnik at (319) 786-4788.

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WINNING IOWA CONSERVATION ARTIST CELEBRATED AT 2007 STATE-FISH ART EXPO

Bloomington, Minn. – Taylor Troendel from Harpers Ferry was personally honored for her winning artwork of the Channel Catfish, a popular Iowa game fish. The event was held at Mall of America in Minneapolis, Minn., during the 9th Annual Wildlife Forever State-Fish Art Expo. Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty proclaimed July 21 “Wildlife Forever State-Fish Art Day” as Smokey Bear and the U.S. Forest Service distributed 5,000 White Pine tree seedlings to Mall visitors.

“The State-Fish Art Expo is a celebration of America’s youth, art, conservation and our fishing heritage,” said Douglas H. Grann, President and CEO of Wildlife Forever. “People across Iowa will be reminded of their state’s wild natural abundance through the creative spirit and imagination of Troendel. I want to commend the educators and generous sponsors who made the 2007 Expo a memorable event for these young artists.”

Deputy Commissioner Bob Meier, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources presented Governor Pawlenty’s proclamation declaring July 21 “Wildlife Forever State-Fish Art Day” in recognition of the program’s unique contribution to America’s youth, fishing, conservation and education. Meier stated, "Conservation education will ultimately determine the future of our wildlife heritage."

Jason Holm, Assistant Regional Director of U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service gave Troendel a rod and reel, a gift certificate for art supplies from Cheap Joe's Art Stuff, a blue ribbon and other special items.

Troendel’s achievements were also celebrated during a special ceremony on the playing field of the Metrodome before the Minnesota Twins on July 22 with the other 39 attending winning artists. Her winning channel catfish artwork was displayed on the big screen for the Sunday crowd. The winners and their families received free entry to the game compliments of the Twins.

For more information, contact Johanna Jones at (763) 253-0222.

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LAKE RED ROCK POOL DRAWDOWN THIS FALL

PELLA – In an ongoing effort to maintain a safe dam and conservation pool, a 10-foot pool drawdown to perform repairs and maintenance to Lake Red Rock’s tainter gates and cables will occur the fall, beginning Sept. 4.

The current elevation of the conservation pool, 742 feet National Geodetic Vertical Datum, permanently submerges the tainter gates’ cables and brackets. De-watering the tainter gate bays is necessary for repairs and replacement of the cables and associated equipment. Conservation pool is a term that refers to the minimum water level normally kept in the reservoir. The conservation pool varies through the year.

The fall drawdown will decrease recreational opportunities in the area through diminished sites or access for wildlife observation, waterfowl hunting and fishing. Preliminary analysis has determined that the lake will be accessible by boat ramp at elevation 732 feet NGVD. However, some ramp options may be limited by siltation, water depth and boat draft. Availability of the boat ramps for public use will be reassessed prior to, and during, the drawdown.

An Environmental Assessment with a Finding of No Significant Impact was completed in February 2005. The assessment evaluated the impacts associated with the proposed drawdown and replacement of the tainter gate lifting cables, as well as periodic inspection and maintenance of the dam. The Environmental Assessment is available on the Internet at:

<http://www2.mvr.usace.army.mil/Documents/EA/RedRock/TainterGateCable/> At the request of the Iowa Department of Natural Resources, the Corps evaluated and coordinated a 27-day extension of the original drawdown period, from 48 to 75 days. No objections to this extension were received.

During the drawdown, the Iowa DNR will be placing material to create fish habitat at several locations, and there will be work on a new boat ramp, access road and canoe launch at Elk Rock State Park. The Corps of Engineers will be doing minor repair work around the lake.

The lake will be lowered 0.5 feet per day, requiring approximately 20 days to complete the 10-foot drawdown. When repairs and construction activities are completed in mid-December, the pool will be raised as quickly as possible, while maintaining outflows of at least 300 cubic-feet-per-second. The total time for the drawdown, associated work, and reservoir refilling is approximately five months, although rainfall and snow amounts will greatly affect the total time to refill the lake. There must be at least 300 cubic-feet-per-second outflows to minimize impacts to communities downstream of the reservoir.

For more information, contact Frank Monfeli, project manager, at 309-794-5640 or Frank.C.Monfeli@usace.army.mil Or contact Sherri Richardson-Duey at Lake Red Rock at 641-828-7522 or Sherri.Richardson-Duey@usace.army.mil

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